

## WXPL lets students sound off

### College radio offers a chance to be heard

BY TIM MCCARTHY

In this age of high-definition televisions, hyperlinked blogs, and streaming superhighways, it's easy to forget about the one simple technological device that permeates our society in cars, dentist offices, and even showers: the classic AM/FM radio.

Now, information and music from the college where you spend every waking moment can be brought up on demand through the magic of analog sound waves.

WXPL 91.3 FM is Fitchburg State College's official student-run college radio station. Student tested and FCC approved, WXPL is a club that acts as a multidisciplinary melting pot of skills in communication arts, public speaking, and musical studies.

"What we're really about is that we're a very small station; our main goal is to allow people to broadcast themselves on open airwaves," said Anthony Geehan, president of WXPL. "It's just another format for students to express themselves. That's why they're here, to be part of the school, and this is another way to do it."

In addition to letting students



STAFF PHOTO BY NICOLETTA AMATO

David Kendrick, left, and Scott Frawley broadcast live from the WXPL studio as they present "Monday 4'O'Clock Radio Show With Scott."

express themselves on air, the club also lets students check on new music sent in from both local bands and national recording labels. And for students who are shy about speaking or have only a passing interest in music, the club

sponsors other activities such as poetry readings.

Despite the small broadcast radius of only 15 miles, WXPL has a long legacy of recognized excellence, with awards dating back to before a portion of the

student body was even born. "It's been around at least 20 years, since 1983 if I'm doing my math right," Geehan said.

*Continued on Page 2*

## Dorm furniture disappears

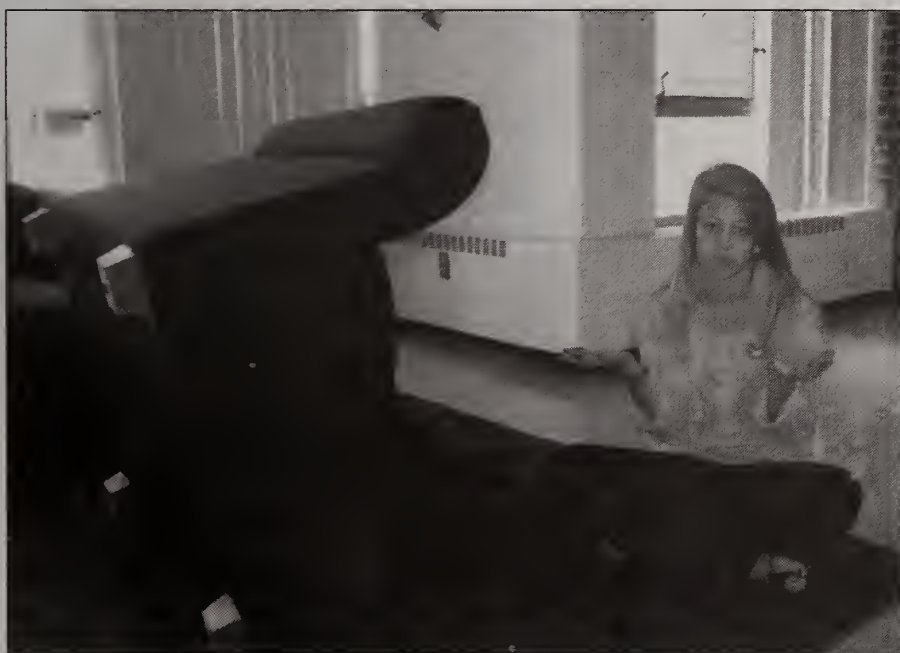
BY MATT HEGARTY  
AND CASSIE URBANO

How does a college student create a comfortable home-away-from-home on campus? Dorm rooms everywhere are notorious for being cramped, but students are still eager and able to fit couches and coffee tables into the small space to make their rooms just a bit cozier. Some students head off to the local Wal-Mart to pick up a futon or chairs, but others find it much easier to take what they can from the common rooms.

Common rooms, set up in suites and dorm buildings, provide students with couches, chairs, tables, and sometimes TVs and Internet access. They are comfortable areas where students can relax, do their homework, or hang out with friends.

"Common rooms are great because they give people a chance to congregate and see people they wouldn't otherwise," says Max Cohen, a Herlihy Hall resident.

While missing common-room furniture may not be the biggest issue at Fitchburg State, it has caused a great



STAFF PHOTO BY NICOLETTA AMATO

Allie Foss knows something's missing - it's the furniture.

deal of frustration among resident students.

"I came out into the common area one afternoon to just relax, and the couch and chairs were gone," said FSC student Anthony Ferraguto.

Many of FSC's freshmen live in "forced triples," in which three people are forced to share a room designed to fit two students comfortably. Sometimes living in a cramped room can

*Continued on Page 2*

## Google-proof your resume

BY MEAGAN COLBURN

Ever tried to Google your name? It's pretty safe to assume that your future employers will. They'll see your interests, blogs, profiles, and photos - and they may get the wrong message.

Remember that anyone can access information you post on the Internet. Try to keep that in mind when writing or posting photos. Is this something you would want on the front page of a newspaper? Is it the type of thing you would want your grandmother to see?

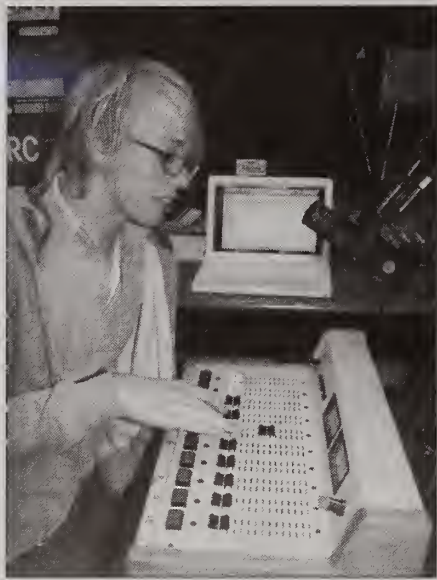
"The best philosophy for Internet users is to have total paranoia. Anything you put on the Internet can come back to haunt you," said Dr. Margarite Roumas of the English department, who stressed the topic when having her class write mock resumes this semester in Writing for the Web.

If you have a MySpace or Facebook account, you have the option of filling out an "interests" field to tell others about yourself. Try to avoid any controversial material in your interests box. Think about what you would put on your resume.

It would not be wise, for example, to write that you are a member of a gun club

*Continued on Page 2*





STAFF PHOTO BY NICOLETTA AMATO  
*Scott Frawley mans the controls at WXPL, FCS's student-run radio station.*

## Tune in to WXPL

*Continued from Page 1*

But the club's history hasn't always been rosy. "I [was a freshman] in 2004, so I've only know it for the past three years," Geehan said. "Despite that, [the station] was very big on campus. The year after, our transmitter broke, so we weren't actually broadcasting until last year when the transmitter was fixed." Despite those technical difficulties, the station continues to produce programming at full steam ahead. "Basically, it's as big as whoever's running it ... makes it. WXPL can either be one of the major things on campus or it can become nothing."

How does Anthony plan to prevent a dip in ratings? "We try to put on lots of concerts in lots of different locations, from Aubuchon to Russell Towers to Mara Village," Geehan said. Recently, WXPL got together with FSC's Route 2 publication to sponsor an open-mic poetry and music slam in Mara Village.

"The upkeep of the station is a big part of this year's planned activities as well," Geehan said. "Shane Franzen of Student Affairs is really helping us out now in that regard. We're going to push for more kids to get shows and hopefully get online by the end of the year."

With the coming of the digital age to WXPL, the meager broadcast radius might quickly cease to matter.

Yet dissent has arisen among the ranks of DJs about Internet broadcasting. According to Geehan, "There's a big argument about that. Some people don't think that it will be a big deal."

"I think it's going to be a big deal since most college radio stations are online now. I know WUML (Umass Lowell) is, as well as Bentley. So, I think it'll be a big deal. The station is currently contained to friends listening to other friends' shows, but that could change. It's the way commercial radio is going today anyway."

With the chance for students to create and broadcast their own content, experience new music, interact with a variety of students, and even offer student bands a platform to broadcast their own creations, WXPL 91.3 is billed as "Your Explosive Alternative."

"We're always interested to hear new bands and get DJ input," Geehan said. "It's a great club to be part of, if you like music or communication-arts stuff in general."

*Continued from Page 1*

create the need for personal space, which the common rooms can provide. Brittany Vara - formerly living in Mara Village, and currently a Herlihy resident - says that she uses the common rooms to "talk on the phone without interruptions, and study." Even the closest of friends and the most agreeable roommates can become bothersome when cooped up in close quarters. They appreciate being able to spread out into the common rooms - but with the furniture missing, "We can't even do that anymore," said Ferraguto.

Why do some students steal the furniture that they should be sharing?

One resident of Mara Village said, "Our common room was bare so we stole stuff from upstairs. Everyone did it." Mara Village is set up with a common area in each suite, and a main common room for the entire building. "We would have competitions to see who got the furniture first," she continued, "and we always put it back at the end of the year. No one cared."

The truth is that someone does care. Mara Village Building Director Kate Thompson said, "A full inventory is taken at the beginning of each semester as to how much furniture is in every room, common room, and main lounge of each Mara Village building." RA's are responsible for keeping track of these numbers as the year progresses, to ensure that no one is stealing the furniture. "It might be easier to take furniture from the main lounges in each building because Mara Village buildings are much smaller than Russell



BY NICOLETTA AMATO

*Jen Corrigan, left, and Allie Foss like to put up their feet and relax.*

Towers and Aubuchon; however, the statement that 'no one cares' is false," said Thompson.

So what happens when furniture needs to be replaced? It's the students responsibility to pay for lost or damaged pieces. Often, the bill is split up among the students; however, Aubuchon Building Director Melissa Tasca explained that an investigation is pursued before any damage claims are made. Campus Living Damage Clerk Angela Saball said that Aubuchon and Russell tend to be the worst as far as damages are concerned. "It switches between them just about each year," she said. Are these students just more rowdy? Russell Towers Building Director Michael McCarthy said that it is "largely based on [Russell Towers and

Aubuchon] being our largest buildings with the most readily accessible common space. In Aubuchon and Russell Towers 300 to 500 residents have access to many areas in the halls."

How much are these students actually paying for the missing or damaged furniture? Saball said, "Furniture is not cheap. I can tell you that." She explains that charges are dependent on the buildings, as each one has different kinds of furniture. Coffee tables range from \$328 to \$600, sofa tables cost \$800 and upholstered chairs cost \$600.

Fortunately, Tasca said, "I think more important than the amount of damages in Aubuchon is the fact that I've seen a positive trend this year of students taking responsibility for their damages."

## Opinion: Look your best online

*Continued from Page 1*

or a pro-choice campaign in your resume, because you might be offending a potential employer. Any controversial issue can bring out strong feelings, and you don't want those strong feelings to go against you.

Blogs can be a great tool for self-expression, and a good way to get your voice heard. But here, too, it is important that you stay away from controversial material - or at the very least, do not attach your name, place of business, email address or personal Web page to it.

And remember to be diplomatic when writing about your current or past places of employment. It's unprofessional to publish complaints - however petty - about your place of business.

Photos you put on the Internet can really influence strangers' assumptions about who you are. Think about the message you are sending about yourself with the photos you post. What are you wearing, where are you, and what are you doing?

It's a good idea to go through your pictures and remove any that may seem inappropriate, even in the slightest way.

Also consider that an innocent picture taken for laughs may be interpreted incorrectly by someone who was not present at the time.

Don't forget about the captions under



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY NICOLETTA AMATO

*A profile photo like this is not likely to score points with potential employers.*

your pictures, either. "Drunk on Thirsty Thursday" might not be a good title to commemorate a night out with friends.

Seeing you do anything illegal or dangerous or irresponsible online will be a huge red flag for a potential employer.

Don't assume that setting your online information to "friends only" will guarantee that only your friends will see it.

Even secure information is not hacker-

proof, and a look at your personal life may be the deciding factor in whether or not you are hired.

Try to make your internet persona something you are proud of - or, at the very least, comfortable with. It can have a large impact on whether or not you land the job. Use the opportunity as a way to sell yourself and reflect your good deeds and honorable endeavors.



# Calendar of events

## Nov. 13

"Have You Seen Andy?" – 7-9 p.m., screening of a documentary by FSC alumna Melanie Perkins; free; Ellis White Lecture Hall, Hammond Campus Center.

"Pullman Car Hiawatha" – 7:30-9 p.m., FSC theater program's performance of the Thornton Wilder play; free; McKay Auditorium, on campus.

FSC Ice Hockey – 7:35 p.m.; away @ Curry.

## Nov. 14

"Pullman Car Hiawatha" – 7:30-9 p.m., FSC theater program's performance of the Thornton Wilder play; free; McKay Auditorium, on campus.

## Nov. 15

Arlo Guthrie in concert – 8-10 p.m., "solo reunion tour"; \$28 general public; \$25 for faculty, staff and seniors; \$10 FSC students; Weston Auditorium; 978-665-3347.

"Pullman Car Hiawatha" – 6:30-8 p.m., FSC theater program's performance of the Thornton Wilder play; free; McKay Auditorium, on campus.

## Nov. 16

"Pullman Car Hiawatha" – 7:30-9 p.m., FSC theater program's performance of the Thornton Wilder play; free; McKay Auditorium, on campus.

## Nov. 17

"Pullman Car Hiawatha" – 7:30-9

p.m., FSC theater program's performance of the Thornton Wilder play; free; McKay Auditorium, on campus.

FSC Ice Hockey – 2:30 p.m.; away @ Salve Regina

## Nov. 20

Gallery exhibition – 6:30-8:30 p.m., artist talk and opening reception for "Sculptures and Drawings by Sally Moore"; free; exhibit continues through Dec. 18; Hammond Building.

FSC Men's Basketball – 7:30; away @UMass Boston.

FSC Women's Basketball – 5:30 p.m.; away @UMass Boston

FSC Ice Hockey – 7 p.m.; away @ Stonehill

## Nov. 27

"Italy's Identity Crisis" – 7:30-9:30 p.m., lecture by John Alcom of Trinity College; free; Kent Recital Hall.

FSC Men's Basketball – 7 p.m., home v. Rhode Island College.

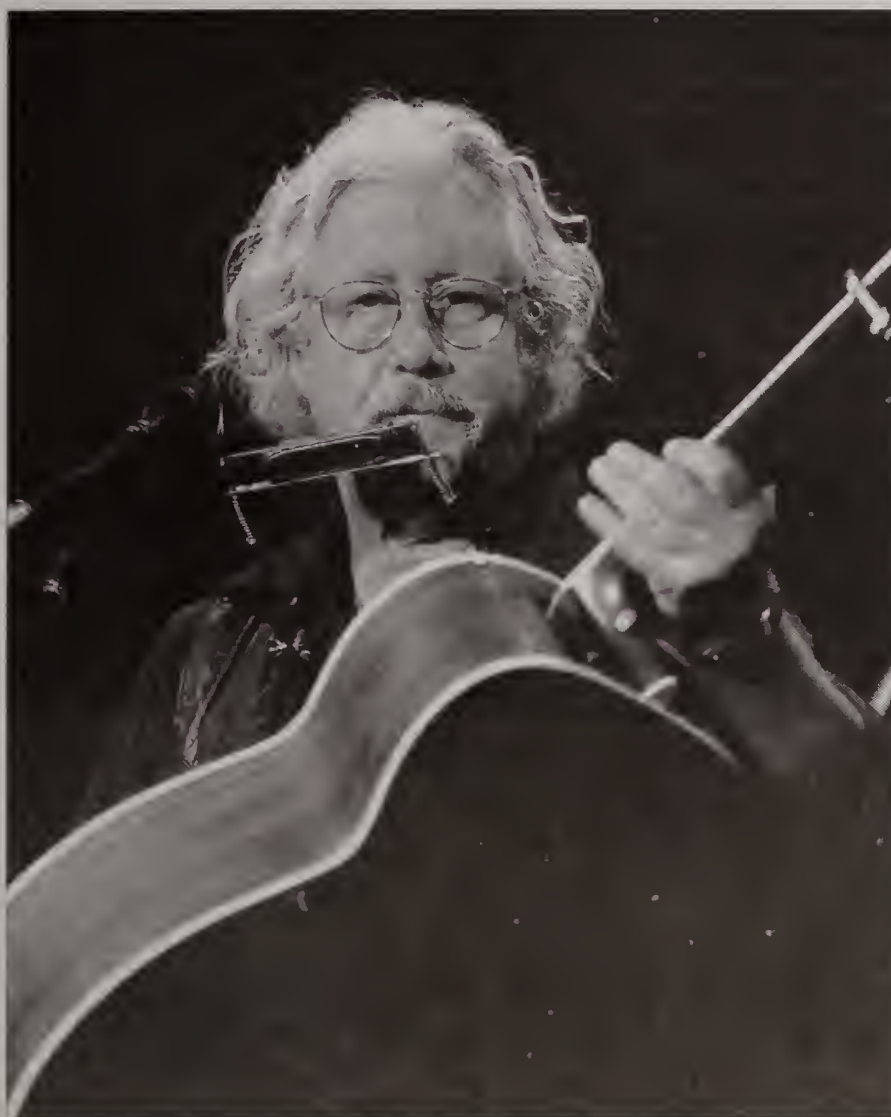
FSC Women's Basketball – 7 p.m., away @ Nichols.

## Nov. 28

FSC Ice Hockey – 7 p.m.; home v. UMass Dartmouth

## Nov. 29

FSC Men's Basketball – 7 p.m., home v. Nichols.



Arlo Guthrie is set to bring his "Solo Reunion Tour" to Fitchburg State College for a performance Nov. 15 in Weston Auditorium.

## Young writers honored at FSC

Fourteen local high school students were honored earlier this year for sharing the story of their heritage through the annual Fitchburg State College Discovering Young Writers Contest.

The contest, sponsored by the English department, seeks to encourage young writers in the community.

The teens, students at Fitchburg and Leominster high schools, wrote about their family history for the theme "My Family, My Heritage."

"The topic for this year inspired a wealth of stories about how families have come to live in this area. Many students wrote about other countries, as well as cherished family tales about colorful forebears," said Dr. Margarite Roumas, associate professor of English.

First-prize winners received a \$100 award, second prize received \$75, third-prize winners were awarded \$50, and honorable mentions each won \$30.

The student winners were honored at a reception at Fitchburg State College.

"We had a difficult time choosing among so many wonderful submissions," said Patricia Smith, assistant professor of English.

"The stories were compelling and diverse."

Winners from Fitchburg High School were: first prize, Jeremy Machado of Susan Rampello-Smith's class; second prize, Courtney Gustafson of Colleen Hirons's class; and third prize, Jessica Mullins of Rampello-Smith's class.

Honorable mentions included Vanessa Bottarro, Shelby Giaccarini, Kia Yang and Mai Kia Yang of Rampello-Smith's class.

Leominster High School winners included: first prize, Rhye Hutchinson of Gail Allo's class; second prize, Toua Thao of Ellen Bernard's class; and third prize, Courtney Henrie of Allo's class.

Honorable-mention winners were Carolyn Miller of James Freel's class, Katelyn Palladino of Jennifer Anderson's class, Lindsey Richard of Allo's class, and AJ Venkatesh of Allo's class.

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# Sophomore wins Golden Helmet award

Fitchburg State sophomore tailback Marlon Thornton (Bloomfield, CT/ Bloomfield) was selected to receive the prestigious Boston Globe Gold Helmet Award for his efforts in a victory over Westfield State College on Oct. 27.

Thornton was presented the award during a weekly New England Football Writers Association luncheon at Harvard University's Dillon Fieldhouse.

The College Division Gold Helmet honors the Player of the Week among all Division II and III football programs

in New England (There is also a Gold Helmet for Division I players given at the luncheon.) Recipients are selected by the NEFWA.

Thornton rushed for a season-high 256 yards on a workmanlike 44 carries (two shy of the school record) and scored four touchdowns to power the Falcons past the Westfield, 49-40, in New England Football Conference action. He also caught three passes for 37 and owned a 5.8-yards-per-carry

average as he eclipsed the 1,000-yard mark for the season. After his second 200-yard performance of the season, Thornton ranks among the best rushers in all of the Division III football. Thornton ranks seventh in the nation in all-purpose yardage (183.4) and his 142.1 rushing yards per game is 10<sup>th</sup> overall. He also ranks 10<sup>th</sup> in the nation in total rushing yards at 1137 and 15<sup>th</sup> in scoring at 11.3 points per game.

FSC averages 460.8 yards from scrimmage per game, 14<sup>th</sup> in the

nation. The Falcons 315.5 yards passing per game is 7<sup>th</sup> overall and their 32.5 points per contests ranks 48<sup>th</sup> in the land.

Thornton is the Falcons' first Gold Helmet Award winner since 2003 when Treavor Smith booted a 52-yard field goal to beat WNEC. The last Falcon running back to get the award was D'Andre Freeman in 1999 after he set the school record for rushing attempts (46) in a 250-yard performance. He also received a Gold Helmet in 1997.

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PHOTO BY THE FREE MESSENGER/TANDPNEWS.COM

The Ryan Joubert Memorial Skatepark in Fitchburg provides a hassle-free zone for skateboarders.

# Skateboarders seek acceptance from police and community

By Brittany Abraham

As with any college, Fitchburg State offers activities for students including trips, concerts and entertainment.

Clubs and organizations support a variety of hobbies and interests, as well. And with a student activity fee of \$90 per year, it appears that these hobbies and interests are a campus priority.

When the hobby is skateboarding, however, things appear different.

Skateboarding is popular among FSC students, but the college's Student Handbook specifically says, "Rollerblades, skateboards, bikes or motorized scooters are not permitted on campus or in campus buildings."

The only place where student skateboarders have the freedom to practice their sport of choice is the Ryan C. Joubert Memorial Skatepark, located several miles from the Fitchburg State College campus. The skatepark is too far away to be convenient for students without cars on campus.

Additionally, skateboarders are not allowed to use their skateboards as transportation to and from the skatepark, due to a city ordinance.

Joe Defabrizio, an FSC junior, said he has had at least four run-ins with the authorities this year, due to his skateboarding hobby.

"I don't understand why it's a big deal," he said. "We skateboard before quiet hours, often in parking lots and other secluded places. It's just a few of us having a good time."

*"It's just a few of us having a good time ... We just wish we had a convenient place to go."*

Joe Difabrizio

Both Campus Police and Fitchburg City Police have reprimanded his group, he said. "I feel like there are worse things and bigger problems in Fitchburg than us skateboarding, and more attention should be paid to that," he added.

While Campus Police are clear about upholding the rules, they do not seem to hold student skateboarding as a top troublesome priority around the campus.

"It's simple: You can't skate on school property," said Officer Tara Axelson. "It's in the handbook. It's a liability. If the student were to get hurt, or hurt someone else, it's on the school."

She added, "Transportation is different than four or five of them doing tricks on campus. It's still not allowed, but if they're being courteous and respectful, they will get that back."

Defabrizio and his friends disagree. "It has never mattered what we were doing," Defabrizio said. "we're always stopped and reprimanded, regardless of if we're using it to get from point A to point B or if we're doing tricks."

Despite the official Campus Police stance, there is a picture of a student

skateboarding down the sidewalk in the school handbook.

Sgt. Glenn C. Fossa of the Fitchburg Police explained the FPD's stance by saying, "Officers work on the Latin term 'in loco parentis,' which means that we act as the community members' parents when parents and guardians are not around. It isn't allowed because the safety of the community members is affected by this hobby."

The police also have discretionary power to arrest anyone who decides to skate on city property, regardless of the person, the time of day, or the manner behind the skateboarding.

But that rarely happens. Eighty percent of the time, Fossa said, skateboarders are approached only in response to complaints from community members.

"Disturbing the peace has no time limitation," Fossa said.

Often, local businesses complain about the noise level, or their perception that the skateboarders are driving away their customers.

While the hobby is considered "good-natured fun" to the skateboarders, their actions can be perceived as a nuisance and a liability by other community members.

"We're doing them a favor by not arresting them," said Fossa.

This "hard truth," however, does not seem to alleviate the frustrations of these skateboarding students.

"We just wish we had a convenient place to go," said Defabrizio.

## Leominster soldier set to serve U.S.

BY ALLEN RUSSELL

Joining the Army during a period of war may sound like a bad idea to some people, but not to one Leominster man. PFC Andrew Franklin signed up for the National Guard in January and is just now getting ready to go off to basic training. Until now, he has only had to worry about the military once a month when he goes to drills.

PFC Franklin said that the drills really helped prepare him for what lies ahead. He will be gone for six months of training in Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., and then he expects to return as a member of the military police.

He says that he is excited about this, because he hopes to become a police officer in civilian life.

After he returns home, Franklin plans to attend Mount Wachusett Community College to earn a degree in criminal justice.

Franklin's unit is currently deployed in Iraq, so there is a good chance that he won't be going overseas unless he volunteers for deployment. Franklin only signed up for three years with the National Guard, although he can be called up to serve for up to five years after he is out.

His commander, Sgt. Geoffrey Allen, said that basic training has changed a lot over the past few years, making it much easier on new recruits.

People in the National Guard typically do better in basic training, he said, because of the drills they run all of their soldiers through before they go.

Otherwise, he said, soldiers are in a delayed-entry program where they just sit around and wait for basic training.

Franklin said he would like to thank the Mothers of America for the changes that have occurred at boot camps across the country. This organization is made up of the mothers of soldiers in the military.

Franklin said he is most worried about the first three weeks of training, and Allen agreed that it was the most stressful time.

Allen said that the first three weeks are to get the recruits used to listening to orders and in physical shape to help them in the field.

"Everything we do," he said, "is to hopefully save these soldiers' lives one day if they are in combat."

## Corrections

"Skateboarder builds on self-expression," a story in Issue 4, was written by Megan Benevides.

A photo on Page 8, Issue 4 showed Peter Uzoma and his friend Terrence Lomax, head producer of Progress DVD Magazine, with a sneaker collection.



# Grading plan throws students a curve

JENNIFER RIPLEY

Have you ever been completely shocked by a test grade you received? Maybe you were expecting to fail, only to find that your score was much higher. Or maybe you thought you did really well, only to find that your score fell in the low C range.

Well, either way, you are not alone. You are probably being graded on a curve.

Students often smile at the very notion of being graded on a curve, hoping this means their grade will be adjusted to a higher score. What most students don't know is that the altered grade may not always be higher than the original.

Brian Marquis, a student at UMass Amherst, was recently a victim of bell-curve grading. One of his instructors graded his class on a curve, adjusting Marquis's grade based on his standing in the class. Marquis felt that according to the syllabus, he had earned an A-

but he received a C for the course.

Why did the bell curve affect his grade so drastically?

It's because the bell curve determines grades according to "relative standing," explained Dr. Claire McAndrew, the chair of the mathematics department at Fitchburg State College. The key for grading on a curve is determining what the largest percentage of the class should get for a grade. "The normal curve is the guide for determining the percent of grades," said McAndrew.

McAndrew explained that on a normal curve, the test scores are distributed in a symmetrical fashion. The majority of grades are located at the middle of the curve, close to the average grade. The further the scores are from the average, the less frequently they appear. Following the rules of statistics, grading on a bell curve would assign a grade of, "A to the top 2.5 percent of grades, B to the next 13.5 percent, C to the middle 68 percent, D to

the next 13.5 percent, F to the bottom 2.5 percent," said McAndrew.

However, McAndrew said, this formula is only one type of grading curve. She explained that instructors might choose to manipulate the curve in various ways.

For example, the percentages of each grade can be altered. The top 84 percent might get A's while the next 13.5 percent get B's and the bottom 2.5 percent get C's. A uniform distribution would assign a grade of A to the top 20 percent, B to the next 20 percent, and so on down the line.

McAndrew said that it is "not a requirement that you give F's" when using bell-curve grading. The divisions of grades are up to the instructor, not the bell curve.

"The bell curve does not force failure," said McAndrew. She explained that bell-curve grading is not based on actual grades. Instead, grades are determined by the relative standing of

a score within a class. Therefore, the people in the bottom percent receive lower grades.

Bell-curve grading should not be confused with scaling. McAndrew explained that while curve grading evaluates a grade based on standing within a class, scaling manipulates the average grade. By increasing the average grade, all the scores are increased by the same amount.

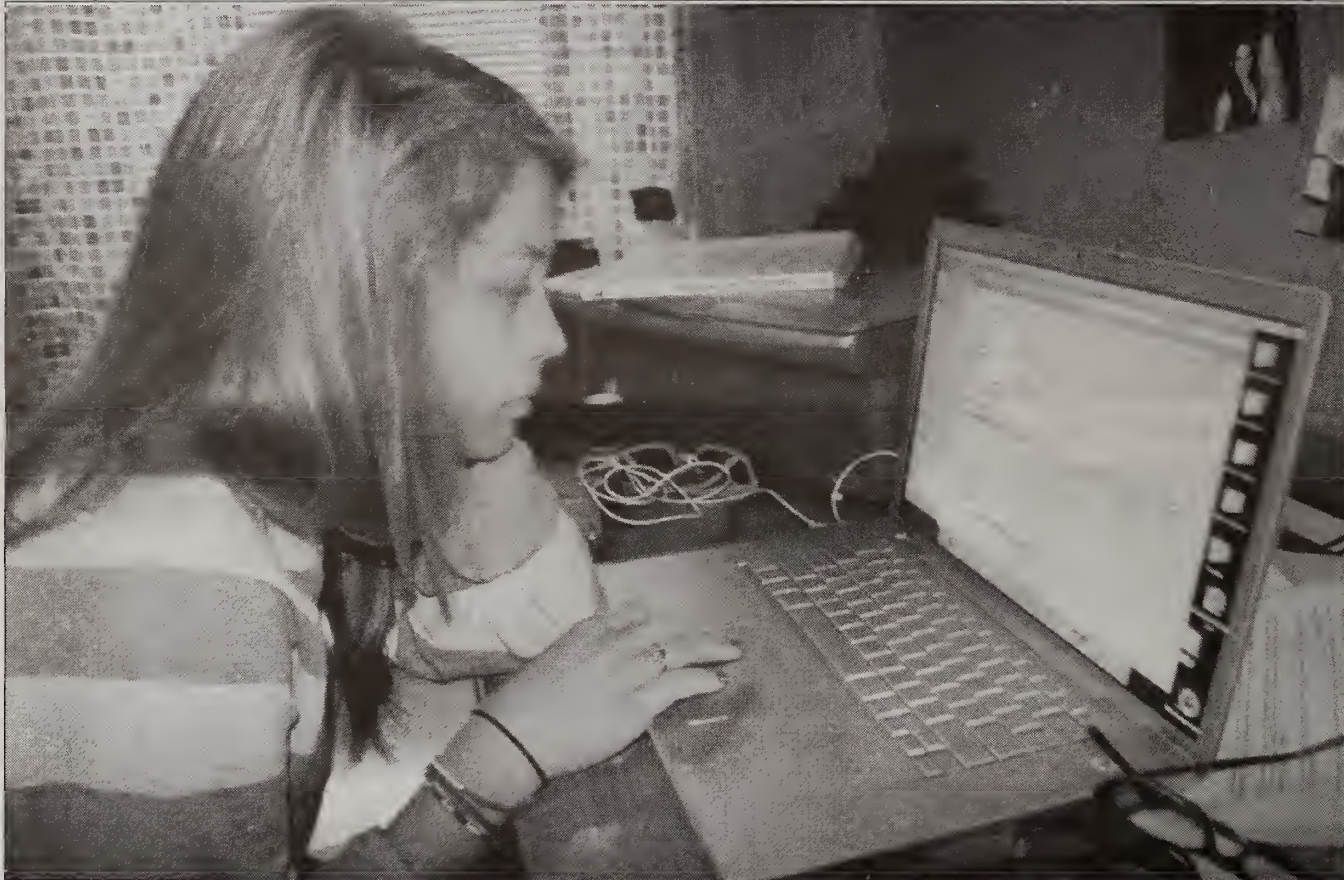
Curve grading is not unfamiliar to students at FSC. Susan Furgason, a senior communications major, said that she has been graded on a curve, but it has always positively affected her test scores.

"It never occurred to me until recently that the curve could be used in a negative way," Furgason said. In her experience, curve grading has been used in instances when there had been a misunderstanding with an assignment or when professors knew that students had been working hard. She feels that to use a curve any other way would be unfair. "If I was given a grade and then marked down, I would feel cheated by the professor," Furgason said.

Dane Volke, a third-year film and video major, said, "The point of scaling is to help." Volke said his grades have been adjusted according to a curve when his class has performed poorly on some tests. "My teacher understood," he said. When professors recognize effort, they are likely to curve grades.

When Volke learned that curve grading could also lower grades, his immediate response was, "That's unfair." As an alternative to curving in such situations, Volke said, "Professors might consider adjusting their teaching methods."

Curve grading also occurs outside school campuses. "SATs are graded on a normal curve," McAndrew said. She explained that for the individual-subject SAT tests, the average grade is 500. The top 2.5 percent score from 700 to 800, the next 13.5 percent score 600 to 700, the middle 68 percent score 400 to 600, the next 13.5 percent score 300 to 400, and the bottom 2.5 percent score 200 to 300.



STAFF PHOTO BY NICOLETTA AMATO

*Allie Foss, a sophomore majoring in special education, keeps up with her studies to keep her grades straight.*

## Network upgrades set to satisfy need for speed

BY JOHN DAABOUL

Have you ever seen someone sitting at a computer, so distressed that it made you squirm? In this day and age, odds are that they were trying to get on the Internet and failing.

Web usage is a big part of the average college student's life, and Fitchburg State College's network is growing stronger. According to Charles D. Maner, FSC's chief information officer, the network has grown by leaps and bounds since the 2005-2006 school year.

"Three years ago, the network performance was about 10 percent of what it is now," Maner said.

During the week, the network's resources are split between the academ-

ic and living areas. From morning to evening, about 75 percent of the power is sent to the classrooms, computer labs and administration buildings, while after-hours the ratio is flipped until morning, as well as on every weekend.

FSC is currently in the process of upgrading its network, which has been the cause of the majority of the Internet outages over the past few months, Maner said.

Originally scheduled to be completed in August during a two-week network shutdown, the project was pushed back due to complications with Verizon. The company rejected the school's timeline and said that they would be coming on Sept. 15. They came on

Sept. 18. As a result of the delay, the network upgrades have had to be done at odd hours during the school year, when there would most likely be less traffic, resulting in late-night gamers frantically calling IT and demanding to know why they aren't connected to World of Warcraft.

When the new system is installed during the target date of mid-November, downtime will become a very rare occurrence, Maner said.

He said the new system is a "double redundancy" multiple connectivity system.

Double redundancy involves the duplication of the key components of a network with the intent of increasing system reliability, basically replicating

the system so that one half exists as the other half's fail-safe.

So in the future when an upgrade is necessary, Maner said, one half of the network would be shut down, while the other half (completely capable in its own right) would handle the campus.

The new system would also increase the network strength by 20 percent, with a potential increase of 100 percent megabits per second.

Maner said the 100 percent increase wouldn't be for years, due to the heavy cost and lack of necessity. A total upgrade wouldn't even be noticed, according to Maner, since the upcoming 20 percent increase would be more than enough to handle FSC's needs.



# Massachusetts college graduates are now required to have health insurance. (Good idea.)

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STAFF PHOTO BY NICOLETTA AMATO

From left, Alan Archibald Jr., Doug Iszlai, Adam LoRusso and Joshua Valliere earn their grill stripes at Midnight Munchies.

## Midnight snack hits the spot

BY NICOLETTA AMATO

On Thursday night, when the dining hall is closed and Campus Pizza's lights turn off for the evening, what is a poor hungry college student supposed to do?

Well, Fitchburg State's Greek Council has come up with a safe and accessible way to settle your late-night cravings.

It's called The Midnight Munchies.

Hosted by the school's fraternities and sororities, Midnight Munchies lasts from 11 p.m. to 1 a.m. in front of the Hammond Building. Hot dogs, hamburgers, and beverages are served for just \$1 apiece.

"The great thing about Midnight Munchies is that all the Greeks get together and do something positive for the whole college community," said Rhonda Basford, vice president of Sigma Sigma Sigma Sorority.

The first Midnight Munchies of the year was held Oct. 25, and the Greek Council deemed it a great success.

Midnight Munchies fan and sophomore FSC student Ryan O'Callahan agreed that "Midnight Munchies is a great idea," because, "I always seem to have the munchies around midnight."

Crowds gathered while the grill illuminated the cold night, and the Red Sox game played on a small radio.

Thanks to the large turnout, it is likely that the Greek Council will continue hosting the Midnight Munchies.

So keep your eyes open for flyers announcing the next Midnight Munchies.



STAFF PHOTO BY NICOLETTA AMATO

*Jen Corrigan and Dave St. Hilaire share a snack and a smile.*

## Opinion: Be prepared for anything

BY JAMES TIRABASSI

Picture this: It's 3:13 a.m. on a Saturday, and you're the father or mother of five beautiful, well raised children, two of whom are sleeping over at a friend's house.

You hear a loud "BANG!" that wakes you up from a sound slumber. You automatically dismiss it as a door slamming, because you didn't hear it too well in the first place.

Just before you manage to fall asleep you hear another loud noise, which you quickly assess was no door slamming. Assuming that this was probably a car accident, you throw your slippers on and run outside in case someone is in need of assistance.

When you open your front door, you are greeted by the strong smell of burning fuel, and flames coming from a house three doors down. Either someone has had an awful accident, or your neighborhood has just been the victim of a terrorist attack.

Stop: What do you do now?

The sad truth is that most families in America do not have a plan for such an event. Yet on a trip to a local amusement park, most families will set a place to meet at the end of the day so everyone knows where to go if separated. So why not discuss with your family what to do if America is attacked on our own soil?

This plan doesn't have to pertain specifically to a terrorist attack; it could be the same plan for a natural disaster, or any other time of great peril.

Many Web sites offer suggestions on what to do in a disaster situation, including a terrorist attack. A quick Google search uncovers plenty of good plans.

For example, the University of Florida's site has tips on "preparing a family communication plan for terrorist attacks."

It says that it is important to have the name and phone numbers of all of the most important people to your family written down in a familiar, accessible place. This is so that everyone will know how to get in contact quickly and easily.

The plan also suggests that you have a leader, or someone responsible for getting in contact with everyone.

It also suggests having a backup so that if the initial person is inaccessible, there will be someone to take his or her place.

Finally, it suggests having a predetermined place to meet up with your loved ones and friends in case telephone communications are down and you can't arrange anything on the spot.

## Internet radio sounds less independent

BY MICHAEL HANSEN

The courts have decided to postpone royalty hikes for Internet radio stations, but the decision seems inevitable. Many music junkies suggest that one option worth rediscovering is your local college radio station.

A recent decision, retroactive to

2006, will affect everyone from personal music blogs to big franchises like Yahoo and AOL. Currently all Internet stations are required to pay a monthly fee to cover hosting and royalties. Rates are going to start at a 5 percent increase, but it will likely be up to 20 percent more expensive per song

within the next three years, according to industry sources. This will weed out the independent stations, leaving only the bigwigs like AOL and Yahoo.

If independent Internet radio does collapse, it may provide a fresh chance for local college radio to re-introduce itself.